

## Working mom pursues business with parents in mind

Transporting kids to activities  
drives her bid for livery service

By TOM BENSON  
The Patriot Ledger

DUXBURY — Janice Fairhurst knows what it's like to have active children in a town without sidewalks or public transportation. She remembers orchestrating trips with her three children when they were all toddlers. Now her days fit the rhythms of her teenagers' classes, softball practices and trips to friends' houses.

This single, working mom spends a lot of time in her car, just like parents across the country and especially in rural suburbs. Does she like to drive? Fairhurst shrugs. As much as anyone, she says.

If she has her way, she will soon be driving much more than anyone else in town. Fairhurst hopes to begin driving the children of Duxbury to school, appointments and anywhere else they need to go by the end of the year. She is banking that there are enough working parents in town struggling to get their kids from activity to activity to make her new business a success.

"People that I've talked to think it's a great idea," she

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said. "I get a sense I won't have a problem filling the space. There's no transportation here at all. You get on your bike and that's about it."

Once The Go Cart, as she plans to call her livery service, is up and running, Fairhurst plans to take kids to and from school and possibly ferry senior citizens during the middle of the day, all from her home in the southern part of town.

The idea came this summer, when two of her children were taking a class at the Duxbury Bay Maritime School and another mother was looking for rides.

"I got a phone call from someone who needed a ride for her son," Fairhurst recalled. "She actually offered to pay me. I declined, but it got me thinking."

"Having three kids, I remember what it was like to drive my daughter to preschool and still have two in car seats. That's really how I got the idea. Especially if it's a working family, it's hard to find rides."

The problem is exacerbated by the widespread nature of the town, the lack of public transportation, the narrow

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BERT LANE photo

Janice Fairhurst has high hopes as she builds her livery business, The Go Cart: "People I've talked to think it's a great idea," she said.

## People ... Fairhurst

# Working mom creating livery service in Duxbury

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streets and the lack of sidewalks. A pedestrian path around town, as a group of residents has advocated, might help alleviate the problem, but no one has yet been able to devise a popular route.

Fairhurst, an avid cyclist, likes the idea of a town path but will still push ahead with her alternative solution to the town's transportation difficulties.

The concept of a home-grown livery service focusing on children is not unprecedented. When Fairhurst lived in Newton, she knew of a company there called Local Motion, which provided similar services.

In under seven years, Local Motion has gone from a staff of just three entrepreneurs and two vans to about 65 people and a fleet of 55 vehicles, including buses and limos, according to co-owner Bruce Barrows.

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Janice Fairhurst

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Fairhurst will start even smaller, with an office in her living room. She is considering getting a minivan once she begins, rather than hauling customers in her Ford Expedition.

She called Local Motion recently to ask for advice, and while Barrows was loath to divulge the secrets of his success to a reporter, he did offer some observations.

"You start this business without knowing what you're getting into," he said. But he added that his company's success was no surprise and that if he could find enough drivers and a way to process all the requests "we could probably be 10 times larger."

Fairhurst will receive only the second livery license in town, according to officials at town hall. The selectmen signed off on the business last week and appeared sold by a short statement from Fairhurst.

"I guess we're about to make some people happy in town," Selectman John Tuffy said at the meeting.

Her children — Kirsten, 16; Lauren, 15; and Nick, 14 — are now all teenagers, so Fairhurst has a demographic study every morning at the breakfast table.

She assumes that most of her business will come in the morning and then after school.

For now, Fairhurst has "a million things to do." She has obtained most of the approvals she needs to go forward and now has to consider the

logistics of her business, from pricing to scheduling to who will drive if she has to answer the phone. At the moment, she hopes to handle both ends of the business.

An MRI technologist working nights at Cape Cod Hospital in Hyannis, Fairhurst plans to keep her night job. She enjoys the work, and even if her day business took off, she might continue to make the commute to the Cape.

She has no dreams of a million-dollar corporation, knowing how difficult running a small business can be. When her children were younger and they lived in Newton she ran a day care center from her home.

"I was home with three kids," Fairhurst said. "I thought I might as well get paid for it."

The new business is "the same idea," Fairhurst explained. She would be driving anyway and may now be able to make money and help other parents in town.

By sometime next year, Fairhurst will probably have a much better sense of whether she likes to drive.